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PUBLIC MEETING SESSION
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
DRAFT LOWER SNAKE RIVER JUVENILE SALMON MIGRATION
FEASIBILITY REPORT/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
WITH
FEDERAL CAUCUS CONSERVATION OF COLUMBIA BASIN FISH
“ALL H-PAPER”

KALISPELL, MONTANA

PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION

MARCH 1, 2000

TRANSCRIBED BY NANCY J. SMITH

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1 THE MODERATOR: Could you please state your name and where you're
2 from and I'll start the timer.

3 MR. CONNER: My name is David Conner. I'm a student at FECC in
4 Kalispell, Montana, and I have a bit of stage fright, so rather than speaking at the meeting
5 tonight, I decided that I would make my statement on a tape-recording. And I'm going to
6 read something I've written here. That might make it easier for me to speak.

7 As a concerned citizen and student, and as a native of The Dalles, Oregon,
8 on the Columbia River, I've been following the lower Snake River dam breaching
9 controversy for over a year now. I have read enough about the options available and the
10 concerns of those who stand to be affected to have at least a general understanding of
11 the issues.

12 It is my opinion that breaching the earthen portions of the four lower Snake
13 River dams is the option most likely to restore the salmon and steelhead runs that
14 migrate up this tributary of the Columbia River. I further believe that time is of the utmost
15 essence in this matter.

16 Remedial projects intended to spare these fair stocks from destructive
17 effects of the dams have ultimately failed. The salmonid populations in this waterway
18 continue to plummet. Even if the dams were breached tomorrow, I doubt if the wild
19 sockeye will survive in the Snake River. As many of us here know, the coho have
20 already gone.

21 If we are to have any hope of saving the remaining species affected, we
22 must act decisively. I recognize the concerns of those who would be adversely affected
23 by the breaching of these dams, particularly those who rely on the river as an economical
24 mode of commercial transport. I agree with those who propose that the funding for the
25 current program of barging juvenile salmon downstream, an effort that has demonstrated

1 poor results, be used to subsidize trucking and rail transportation costs incurred by
2 businesses who have come to depend on the less expensive barging system, which will
3 no longer be available to be able to navigate this waterway.

4 If this funding proves to be insufficient, I consider it to be the responsibility
5 of all of us as a nation to make up the difference in additional federal funding. We are
6 responsible for this environmental crisis which we have created. We are responsible, not
7 only to the Native Americans to whom we guaranteed treaty rights to the salmon fishery,
8 and to future generations of all races, but to the human record and to nature itself.

9 What we do here is of little consequence in the greater scheme of things.
10 This planet has seen mass extinctions in the past that have eliminated up to 96 percent
11 of all species at the time. So we're only kidding ourselves if we think we can do too much
12 damage. But we can do damage, and we are doing just that.

13 If we do not establish a sustainable mode of human existence in this world,
14 we will one day find Homo sapiens on our list of extinct species. And if that fate should
15 befall us, we will have taken many other species down with us. But something will
16 survive, life will go on, and we will not be missed.

17 THE MODERATOR: Okay. Sir, the microphone is on. If you could state
18 your name and where you're from, and then I'll start the timer.

19 MR. KRECK: All right. My name's Lauren Kreck. I live in Columbia Falls,
20 Montana, and I have lived here for the last 50 years. My address is Box 536 in Columbia
21 Falls, 59112.

22 I follow the idea that these dams should be breached, that we should bring he
23 salmon back. I think that this can be compensated for by an examination of the use of
24 electricity and the excessive use of electricity and yard lights, all kinds of things like -- Las
25 Vegas is a good example.

